The violence in Sudan and South Sudan, Nigeria, and the Central African Republic continues to drive people across the border into Chad, compounding the already protracted refugee crises in the east, the south, and the Lake regions of the country. There are now close to 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Chad. Between December 2019 and January 2020, approximately 16,000 new Sudanese refugees crossed the border into eastern Chad fleeing inter-ethnic violence. The new influx was designated as an emergency prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; Chad, UNHCR, and their partners are addressing an emergency within an emergency.

COVID-19 has destabilized the lives of refugees and migrants, cutting off access to income and increasing vulnerability to violence. To respond to their heightened needs, HIAS Chad has modified its services, implementing remote support and developing other innovative solutions. HIAS Chad helps the most vulnerable, including single women, women-headed households, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), survivors of torture, older people, people with disabilities and serious medical conditions, and LGBTQ refugees.

**HIAS IN CHAD**
- **Founded:** 2005
- **Staff Size:** 115
- **Country Director:** Roch Souabedet
- **Office Locations:** N’Djamena; 13 refugee camps along the eastern border with Sudan: Am Nabak, Bredjing, Djabal, Farchana, Gaga, Goz Amir, Iridimi, Kouchaguine-Moura, Kounoungou, Mile, Oure Cassoni, Touloum, Treguine; and one site, Kerfi.

**HIAS PROGRAMS AND FOCUS**
HIAS protects and supports refugees to build new lives and reunite with family members in safety and freedom. Working with refugees since 2005, HIAS Chad focuses on strengthening community-based protection networks, providing mental health and psychosocial support, distributing food and non-food items, and implementing “permagardening” methodology.

**Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (CB-MHPSS)**
Refugees and forcibly displaced people face adversity and extreme stressors, including loss of loved ones, violence, and disruptions to daily life. HIAS’ community-based mental health programs train community members to recognize acute emotional distress in children and adults.
as a result of crisis, and how to respond with empathy and respect. HIAS Chad provides multi-layered psychosocial services to support individuals and communities and enhance resilience and capacity to cope. It also facilitates trainings on psychological first aid. HIAS Chad has reinforced its partnership with community-based protection network members, including faith and religious leaders (men) and Seidates (women faith leaders), to encourage them to continue to serve as emotional support providers and facilitators of change in attitudes in their communities.

**Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response**

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced displacement. HIAS’ GBV services are driven by the needs and the voices of survivors, and our GBV programming helps forcibly displaced women and girls pursue their potential, free from violence and gender-related oppression. Through HIAS Chad's community mobilizer program, HIAS identifies and helps those vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, including at-risk women and children. HIAS’ community mobilizers are refugees who live in the camps, supporting those at highest risk of exploitation and with the greatest need for protection and care. Community mobilizers conduct public education programs to address protection concerns within the refugee community as well as challenges that arise from interactions with the host community.

**Emergency Response**

In addition to responding to the needs of the protracted refugee caseload in Chad, HIAS has been providing emergency assistance to newly arrived refugees. HIAS is responding to the influx of approximately 3,000 Central African Republic refugees and is providing emergency assistance to Sudanese arrivals from the Darfur region. Since the start of 2020, HIAS Chad has worked closely with partners to rapidly respond to emergency influxes of new refugees fleeing Darfur and other neighboring regions, by dispatching staff and lifesaving support, including food, clothing, PPE, and other core relief items. HIAS staff are on site to provide the newly arrived refugees with psychological first aid counseling.

**Economic Inclusion**

Access to dignified, sustainable, and safe livelihoods are at the core of HIAS’ economic inclusion interventions. Our methodology enables refugees, vulnerable migrants, and host communities to find opportunities that will increase resilience, regain dignity, and provide opportunities to build independent and meaningful futures. In 2017, HIAS launched a new program focusing on the permagardening methodology, a small-scale agricultural technique that maximizes soil fertility and water management using local resources. Within three months, HIAS trained 20 lead gardeners and less than two weeks later, the lead gardeners trained an additional 300 refugees. All 300 have since started their own household kitchen gardens, contributing to efforts to strengthen food security in the region. HIAS empowers women and girls through tailoring, bread making, knitting, and perfume-making activities in various camps. The projects promote self-reliance and strengthen the economic resilience of vulnerable populations like survivors of gender-based violence.

**Food Distribution**

HIAS, in partnership with UNHCR, World Food Programme, and the government of Chad, distributes food to refugees throughout eastern Chad. Food distribution is a lifesaving activity that is particularly important in the context of COVID-19. Many refugees are unable to engage in livelihood activities and remain self-reliant, and some of the food distribution is returning to a refugee status-based model.

**CONTACT**

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